

GIFT MEDIATING METHOD AND A COMPUTER PRODUCT

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a gift mediating
5 method used to mediate a gift on-line and a computer-readable
recording medium storing a gift mediating program,
particularly to a gift mediating method capable of improving
the convenience and profitability of a sender, receiver,
and seller of a gift and a computer-readable recording medium
10 storing a gift mediating program.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

A gift has been sent so far from a sender to a receiver
in accordance with customs such as a summer gift, year-end
15 gift, and New Year's card. In general, a sender selects
a desired gift out of various kinds of gifts in a department
store or the like while estimating the taste of a receiver
in an allowable price range and sends a selected gift to
the receiver.

20 However, the gift selected by the sender is not always
useful for the receiver. In this case, a problem occurs
that the sent gift is very wasteful because it is not used
by the receiver at all or it embarrasses the receiver.
Therefore, means and a method for effectively solving the
25 problem have been earnestly desired so far.

In a gift season for summer gifts or year-end gifts, a gift corner has been set so far in a department store (seller side) in which various kinds of gifts such as drinks, dairy products, and marine products have been arranged. A sender
5 selects a gift at the gift corner and presents the selected gift to a receiver via a distributor by using the sending service of the department store. Then, the receiver receiving the gift from the distributor sends a letter of appreciation to the sender through communication means such
10 as a telephone or postcard.

The custom of presenting a gift is one important factor for keeping a smooth human relation. Realistically, however, a gift sender, gift receiver, and gift seller respectively have the following problem.

15 That is, a sender has a problem that he (or she) must go to a department store and select a desired gift out of various kinds of gifts at the department store. Therefore, a problem occurs that this is very troublesome for the sender. Particularly, because many senders come with a rush in a
20 gift season, there is no time for each sender to steadily select a gift. As a result, even when there are a plurality of receivers, the sender selects the same gifts.

Moreover, a problem occurs that a gift is very unprofitable because, even if the gift is sent to a receiver
25 with much effort, the receiver does not use the gift since

the gift is not suitable for the taste of the receiver and it is difficult to use the gift.

In this case, there are some department stores that respectively provide a service in which an unnecessary gift
5 can be replaced with other useful gift. However, replacement of a gift is very troublesome for a receiver because the receiver must go to the department store of the gift and perform a complex replacement procedure.

Moreover, when a receiver is absent at a gift delivery
10 date, the receiver must request redelivery of the gift to the distributor of the gift. That is, because a receiver have not been able to receive a gift so far in accordance with his (her) condition, this has been lacking in convenience. In this case, there may be a receiver who wants
15 to reject a gift sent from an unfavorable sender. In this case, however, it has been difficult to reject the gift so far because the gift has been delivered by a distributor.

Moreover, a receiver receiving a gift generally gives thanks to the sender through communication means such as
20 a telephone or postcard. In fact, however, a problem occurs that a mental burden is forced on a receiver because communication is troublesome for the receiver or it takes a lot of time for communication as the number of gifts increases.

25 Furthermore, a store in a gift season has a problem

that costs such as labor cost and space cost increase because it is necessary to secure a space for setting a gift corner and increase the number of store clerks and moreover, operations (replacement, stock control, and sales control) due to gift replacement requests increase. Moreover, the delivery cost increases when a receiver is absent.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of this invention is to provide a gift mediating method capable of improving the convenience and profitability of a sender, receiver, and seller of a gift. It is another object of this invention to provide a computer readable recording medium that stores a computer program which when executed realizes the method according to the present invention.

The gift mediating method according to one aspect of this invention comprises a receiver corresponding step of providing the gift order information sent from the sender of the gift to a receiver-side client set to the receiver side of the gift, a gift change step of storing the gift change information about change of the gift supplied from the receiver-side client, and a sender corresponding step of providing the gift change information corresponding to the receiver to a sender-side client set to the sender side when the sender-side client executes gift order processing

for the receiver.

According to the above-mentioned aspect, the gift change information about a receiver is stored and the gift change information is provided to a sender-side client when
5 a gift is ordered. Therefore, it is possible to confirm the trend of the taste of the receiver in accordance with the gift change information and thereby, it is possible to improve the convenience and profitability of a sender, receiver, and seller of a gift by avoiding an unnecessary
10 gift from being presented.

The gift mediating method according to another aspect of this invention comprises a receiver corresponding step of providing the gift order information sent from the sender of the gift to a receiver-side client set to the receiver
15 side of the gift, a letter-of-appreciation accepting step of accepting a letter of appreciation to be sent to the sender from the receiver, and a letter-of-appreciation sending step of sending a letter of appreciation to the sender-side client at least in the form of electronic data.

20 According to the above-mentioned aspect, because a letter of appreciation addressed to a sender from a receiver is accepted and sent to a sender-side client at least in the form of electronic data, it is possible to improve the convenience of the receiver.

25 The gift mediating method according to still another

aspect of this invention comprises a receiver corresponding
step of providing the gift order information supplied from
the sender to a receiver-side client set to the receiver
side of the gift, a letter-of-rejection accepting step of
5 accepting a letter of rejection for rejecting the gift sent
from the sender, and a letter-of-rejection sending step of
sending the letter of rejection to the sender-side client
at least in the form of electronic data.

According to the above-mentioned aspect, because a
10 letter of rejection for rejecting a gift sent from a sender
is accepted and sent to a sender-side client at least in
the form of electronic data, it is possible to electronically
record and control that the receiver does not receive the
gift, reduce the mental burden of the receiver due to
15 rejection of the gift, and avoid an unnecessary delivery.

The gift mediating method according to still another
aspect of this invention comprises a gift-designation
accepting step of accepting a designation of the receiver
of the gift, a transmitting step of transmitting the
20 information about the receiver, and a receiving step of
receiving the information about a gift suitable for the
receiver among the gift change information about change of
gifts presented to the receiver in the past.

According to the above-mentioned aspect, because the
25 information of a gift suitable for the receiver concerned

is received out of the gift change information, it is possible to confirm a gift liked by the receiver and thereby, avoid an unnecessary gift from being presented, and improve the convenience and profitability of a sender, receiver, and
 5 seller of the gift.

The gift mediating method according to still another aspect of this invention comprises a gift-designation accepting step of accepting a designation of the receiver of the gift, a transmitting step of transmitting the
 10 information about the receiver, and a receiving step of receiving the information of a gift not suitable for the receiver among the gift change information about change of gifts presented to the receiver in the past.

According to the above-mentioned aspect, because the
 15 information of a gift not suitable for the receiver concerned is received out of the gift change information, it is possible to confirm a gift not liked by the receiver. Therefore, it is possible to avoid an unnecessary gift from being presented and improve the convenience and profitability of
 20 a sender, receiver, and seller of a gift.

The gift mediating method according to still another aspect of this invention comprises a receiving step of receiving the gift order information including the information about the sender of the gift to be presented
 25 to the receiver, a designation accepting step of accepting

a designation of a letter-of-appreciation transmitting destination out of the received gift order information, and a transmitting step of transmitting the designation information showing that the letter of appreciation is
5 transmitted in accordance with the designation.

According to the above-mentioned aspect, because the designation information showing that a letter of appreciation is transmitted from a receiver to a sender is transmitted, it is possible to improve the convenience of
10 the receiver about sending of the letter of appreciation.

The gift mediating method according to still another aspect of this invention comprises a receiving step of receiving the gift order information including the information about the sender of the gift to be presented
15 to the receiver, a designation accepting step of accepting a designation for rejecting the gift out of the received gift order information, and a transmitting step of transmitting the designation information showing that the gift is rejected in accordance with the designation.

20 According to the above-mentioned aspect, because the designation information showing that a gift presented from a sender is rejected is transmitted, it is possible to reduce the mental burden of a receiver due to rejection of the gift and avoid unnecessary delivery of the gift.

25 The computer readable recording medium according to

another aspect of the present invention stores a computer program which when executed realizes the method according to the present invention.

Other objects and features of this invention will
5 become apparent from the following description with reference to the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing a configuration of
10 an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2A to Fig. 2C are illustrations showing table structures of various databases of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3A and Fig. 3B are illustrations showing table
15 structures of various databases of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 is a flowchart for explaining operations of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 5 is a flowchart for explaining the gift ordering
20 in Fig. 4;

Fig. 6 is a flowchart for explaining the gift confirmation in Fig. 4;

Fig. 7 is a flowchart for explaining the letter-of-appreciation acceptance in Fig. 6;

25 Fig. 8 is a flowchart for explaining the gift change

in Fig. 6;

Fig. 9 is a flowchart for explaining the scheduled-delivery-date change in Fig. 6;

Fig. 10 is a flowchart for explaining the rejection
5 in Fig. 6;

Fig. 11 is an illustration showing one of top screens 200 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 12 is an illustration showing one of member registration screens 210 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 13 is an illustration showing one of selection
10 screens 220 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 14 is an illustration showing one of best/worst-gift-list screens 230 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 15 is an illustration showing one of
15 general-gift-list screens 240 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 16 is an illustration showing one of best-gift-list screens 250 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 17 is an illustration showing one of gift-list
20 screens 260 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 18 is an illustration showing one of letter-of-appreciation edition screens 270 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 19 is an illustration showing one of confirmation
25 screens 280 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 20 is an illustration showing one of scheduled-delivery-date change screens 290 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 21 is an illustration showing one of gift list
5 screens 260A of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 22 is an illustration showing one of gift change screens 300 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 23 is an illustration showing one of gift list screens 260B of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

10 Fig. 24 is an illustration showing one of letter-of-rejection edition screens 310 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 25 is an illustration showing one of confirmation screens 320 of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

15 Fig. 26 is an illustration showing one of gift list screens 260C of the embodiment in Fig. 1;

Fig. 27 is an illustration showing one of detail screens 330 of the embodiment in Fig. 1; and

Fig. 28 is a block diagram showing a modification of
20 the embodiment in Fig. 1.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

A preferred embodiment of a gift mediating method and a computer-readable recording medium storing a
25 gift-mediating program of the present invention is described

below in detail by referring to the accompanying drawings.

Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing a configuration of an embodiment of the present invention. In Fig. 1, sender-side clients 101 to 10n denote n computer systems to be operated by a sender of a gift, which is connected to Internet 20 through communication systems such as a modem, terminal adapter, and router and a telephone line (or leased line). These sender-side clients 101 to 10n are used for on-line order of a gift through a gift-mediating Web site 60 by accessing a server 50 to be described later through the Internet 20 in accordance with TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol).

In the sender-side client 101, a control section 111 controls various sections and has a Web browser 121 and a mailer 131. The Web browser 121 obtains the data for Web pages from the server 50 through the Internet 20 in accordance with an URL (Uniform Resource Locator) input from an input section 171 and performs the display control of interpreting the data and making an output section 181 display the data. The input section 171 is an input device such as a keyboard or mouse. The output section 181 is an output device such as a display or printer.

The mailer 131 is a program for generating an electronic mail or transceiving an electronic mail in accordance with POP 3 (Post Office Protocol version 3) or SMTP (Simple Mail

Transfer Protocol). An HD (hard disk drive) 141 is a large-capacity recording medium to record computer programs and various data values.

A RAM (Random Access Memory) 151 is a recording medium
5 in or from which data can be written or read and is accessed by the control section 111. A communication control interface 161 controls the communication with the Internet 20 in accordance with the above-described TCP/IP. An input/output interface 191 serves as an interface between
10 the input section 171 and output section 181 on one hand and various sections on the other. Other sender-side clients 102 (not illustrated) to 10n are constituted similarly to the sender-side client 101.

Receiver-side clients 301 to 30m are computer systems
15 set to the receiver side of a gift, which is connected to the Internet 20 through communication system such as a modem, terminal adapter, and router and a telephone line (or leased line). These receiver-side clients 301 to 30m are used to confirm a gift, change scheduled delivery dates, edit a
20 letter of appreciation or rejection, and change gifts through the Web site 60 by accessing a server 50 to be mentioned later through the Internet 20 in accordance with TCP/IP. Moreover, the receiver-side clients 301 to 30m are constituted similarly to the sender-side client 101.

25 Seller-side clients 401 to 40s are s computers set

to the seller side (such as a department store) of a gift, which are connected to the Internet 20 through communication systems such as a modem, terminal adapter, and router and a telephone line (or leased line). These seller-side clients 401 to 40s are used to register a gift and control the order and shipment of a gift by accessing a server 50 to be mentioned later through the Internet 20 in accordance with TCP/IP. Moreover, the seller-side clients 401 to 40s are constituted similarly to the sender-side client 101.

The server 50 is connected to the Internet 20 through a not-illustrated fire wall or router and accessed by the above sender-side clients 101 to 10n, receiver-side clients 301 to 30m, and seller-side clients 401 to 40s. The server 50 functions as a gift mediating system for mediating a gift between three parties of a sender, receiver, and seller through the Web site 60.

In the case of the server 50, a communication control interface 51 controls the communication with the Internet 20 in accordance with TCP/IP. A control section 52 controls various sections, which is constituted of a main control section 53, sender-related control section 54, receiver-related control section 55, database control section 56, mail-transceiving control section 57, and Web-page generating section 58. The main control section 53 controls various sections and certifies a member or not

by using an ID and a password to be mentioned later when the server 50 is logged in.

The sender-related control section 54 executes processing related to a sender. In this case, gift ordering
5 for accepting an order of a gift from a sender is listed as the sender-related processing. The receiver-related control section 55 executes receiver-related processings. The receiver-related processings include gift confirmation, letter-of-appreciation acceptance, gift change, scheduled
10 delivery-date change, and gift rejection.

The gift confirmation is a processing for a receiver to confirm a sender, gift content, or scheduled delivery date. The letter-of-appreciation acceptance is a processing for accepting a letter of appreciation sent from a receiver
15 to a sender. The gift change is a processing for changing a gift presented from a sender to other gift on-line before the gift is actually delivered when the gift is not suitable for the taste of the receiver. The scheduled delivery date change is a processing for a receiver to change a scheduled
20 gift delivery date to another date before the gift is actually delivered because of certain reasons of the receiver. The gift rejection is a processing for rejecting a gift sent from a sender.

The database control section 56 controls accesses to
25 a member control database 100, gift commodity database 110,

gift control database 120, gift-change control database 130,
and letter of appreciation/rejection standardized-sentence
database 140. Details of these member control database 100,
gift commodity database 110, gift control database 120,
5 gift-change control database 130, and letter of
appreciation/rejection standardized-sentence database 140
are will be described later.

The mail-transceiving control section 57 controls an
address of an electronic mail to be transferred between the
10 sender-side clients 101 to 10n, receiver-side clients 301
to 30m and seller-side clients 401 to 40s and generates a
mail format. The Web-page generating section 58 generates
a Web page to be read by the sender-side clients 101 to 10n,
receiver-side clients 301 to 30m, and seller-side clients
15 401 to 40s. The storing section 59 is a hard disk drive
to store various data values in accordance with the control
of the main control section 53.

The member control database 100 is a database for
storing the member information about members (sender and
20 receiver). Specifically, the member control database 100
has fields of "member ID", "password", "name", "address",
"mail address", "card number", "best-gift opening flag",
and "worst-gift opening flag" as shown in Fig 2A.

"Member ID" denotes an identifier for identifying a
25 member. "Pass word" is used to certify that a person who

logs in the server 50 is a formal member. "Name" denotes the information about the name of a member. "Address" denotes the information about the address of a member. "Mail address" denotes the information about the address of an electronic mail for communication with a member. "Card number" denotes the information about the number for a credit card used for settlement of accounts when a gift is ordered.

"Best-gift opening flag" denotes a flag showing whether the information about a gift liked by a receiver (referred to as best gift) is opened to a sender currently selecting a gift, which is set by a member when the member is registered. That is, when opening the information about a best gift to a sender, "Yes" is set to "best gift flag". However, when not opening the information about the best gift to the sender, "No" is set to "best gift flag".

"Worst-gift opening flag" is a flag showing whether to open the information about a gift (worst gift) not liked by a receiver to a sender currently selecting a gift, which is set by a member when the member is registered. That is, when opening the information about the worst gift to a sender, "Yes" is set to "worst gift". However, when not opening the information to the sender, "No" is set to "worst gift". Moreover, in the case of an embodiment, the information about a best gift and a worst gift can be opened only to specific members.

The information about the best gift and worst gift is generated in accordance with the change history of gifts of a receiver and shows the trend of the taste of the receiver. That is, the information about the best and worst gifts serves
5 as a criterion for a sender to select a gift, which is used as the information for avoiding the above problems due to presentation of a gift not liked by a receiver.

In Fig. 1, the gift commodity database 110 is a database for storing the information about gift commodities
10 registered by the seller-side clients 401 to 40s. Specifically, the gift commodity database 110 has fields of "commodity ID", "specification", "thumbnail file", and "price" as shown in Fig. 2B.

"Commodity ID" denotes an identifier for identifying
15 a store and a gift commodity and is constituted of "store name" and "gift commodity name". For example, "A-store drink assortment" denotes store name = A store and gift commodity name = drink assortment. "Specification" denotes the information about the specification of a gift commodity.
20 "Thumbnail file" denotes the information about the file name of a thumbnail image of a gift commodity. "Price" denotes the information about the selling price of a gift commodity.

In Fig. 1, the gift control database 120 is a database for storing the control information of a gift ordered from
25 a sender. Specifically, the database 120 has fields of "gift

ID", "receiver ID", "sender ID", "kind of commodity",
"commodity ID", "number of gifts", "scheduled delivery date",
"letter of appreciation/rejection ID", and "rejection flag"
as shown in Fig. 2C.

5 "Gift ID" denotes an identifier for specifying a gift
ordered from a sender. "Receiver ID" denotes an identifier
for identifying a sender, which corresponds to "member ID"
of the member control database 100 (refer to Fig. 2A).
"Sender ID" denotes an identifier for identifying a sender,
10 which corresponds to "member ID" of the member control
database 100 (refer to Fig. 2A). "Kind of commodity" denotes
the information about the kind of a commodity.

 "Commodity ID" corresponds to "commodity ID" of the
gift commodity database 110 (refer to Fig. 2B). "Number
15 of gifts" denotes the information about the number of gifts
to be presented to the same receiver. "Scheduled delivery
date" denotes the information about a scheduled delivery
date for delivering a gift to a receiver. "Letter of
appreciation/rejection ID" denotes an identifier for
20 identifying a letter of appreciation or a letter of rejection
to be sent from a receiver to a sender. "Rejection flag"
denotes a flag (shown by "O" in Fig. 2C) showing that a gift
to be sent from a sender to a receiver is rejected before
the gift is actually delivered to the receiver.

25 In Fig. 1, the gift-change control data base 130 is

a database for storing the gift-change control information when the gift is changed to other gift on-line before the gift is actually delivered to a receiver because the gift is not suitable for the taste of the receiver. Specifically, 5 the gift-change control database 130 has fields of "change ID", "gift ID", "receiver ID", "original commodity ID", "new commodity ID", and "change date" as shown in Fig. 3A.

"Change ID" denotes an identifier for identifying the gift-change control information. "Gift ID" corresponds to 10 "gift ID" of the gift control database 120 (refer to Fig. 2C). "Receiver ID" denotes an identifier for identifying a receiver who changes gifts. "Original commodity ID" denotes an identifier for identifying a gift commodity before changed and corresponds to "commodity ID" of the gift control 15 database 120 (refer to Fig. 2C). "New commodity ID" denotes an identifier for identifying a changed gift commodity. "Change date" denotes the data for a date on which gifts are changed.

In Fig. 1, the letter-of-rejection 20 standardized-sentence database 140 is a database for storing the standardized-sentence data for a letter of rejection from a receiver to a sender. Specifically, the letter-of-rejection standardized-sentence database 140 has fields of "type", "letter of appreciation/rejection ID", 25 and "standardized-sentence data" as shown in Fig. 3B.

"Type" denotes the information about the type of a letter of appreciation and the type of a letter of rejection. IN Fig. 1, "summer gift", "year-end gift", "New Year's greetings", and "celebration" correspond to a letter of appreciation. "Return" corresponds to a letter of rejection. "Letter of rejection ID" denotes an identifier for identifying a letter of appreciation/rejection. "Standardized-sentence data" denotes the data for a standardized sentence to be entered in a letter of appreciation/rejection and has the content corresponding to "Type".

Then, operations of the above embodiment are described below by referring to flowcharts shown in Figs. 4 to 10 and screen examples shown in Figs. 11 to 27. When the server 50 shown in Fig. 1 is accessed, the main control section 53 displays a top screen 200 shown in Fig.11 on the output section of the client concerned. An ID input space 201, password input space 202, log-in button 203, member registration button 204, sender-dedicated-screen button 205, receiver-dedicated-screen button 206, and end button 207 are displayed on the top screen 200.

In this case, determinations in steps SA1, SA2, and SA4 to SA7 shown in Fig. 4 are performed by the server 50. In step SA1, it is determined whether member registration is requested, that is, the member registration button 204

is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the determination in step SA2 is performed.

In step SA2, it is determined whether log-in is requested, that is, the log-in button 203 is pressed when
5 a member ID and a password are input to the ID input space 201 and password input space 202. When the determination result is "No", the determination in step SA1 is performed. However, when the determination result in step SA2 is "Yes", the member control database 100 is consulted in step SA3
10 and certification is performed in accordance with the above member ID and password.

In step SA4, it is determined whether the certification result is OK. When the determination result is "No", the determination in step SA1 is performed. However, when the
15 determination result in step SA4 is "Yes", the determination in step SA5 is performed. It is determined in step SA5 whether the sender-dedicated-screen button 205 is pressed by a sender. When the determination result is "No", the determination in step SA6 is performed.

In step SA6, it is determined whether the
20 receiver-dedicated-screen button 206 is pressed by a receiver. When the determination result is "No", the determination in step SA7 is performed. It is determined in step SA7 whether the end button 207 is pressed. When
25 the determination result is "No", the determination in step

SA5 is performed. However, when the determination result in step SA7 is "Yes", the determination in step SA1 is performed.

In this case, when the member registration button 204 is pressed by a member candidate through a client, the main control section 53 sets the determination result in step SA1 to "Yes" to execute the member registration in step SA8. Specifically, the main control section 53 displays the member registration screen 210 shown in Fig. 12 on the output section of the client of the member candidate.

Thereby, the member candidate inputs information to a member-information input space 211, best-gift-opening-flag setting space 212, and worst-gift-opening-flag setting space 213 on the member registration screen 210. Each piece of the information input to the member information input space 211 to word-gift-opening-flag setting space 213 corresponds to each field (but except password) of the member control database 100 shown in Fig. 2A. Then, when a registration button 214 is pressed, the main control section 53 stores the input information in the member control database 100 (refer to Fig. 2A).

Then, a case is described in which a sender orders a gift. In this case, the sender inputs his (or her) member ID and password to the ID input space 201 and password input

space 202 shown in Fig. 11 by operating the sender-side client 101 and then, presses the log-in button 203. Thereby, the main control section 53 sets the determination result in step SA2 to "Yes". In step SA3, the main control section 53 executes certification. In step SA4, the main control section 53 determines whether the certification result is OK and in this case, sets the determination result to "Yes".

Then, when the sender-dedicated-screen button 205 is pressed by a sender, the main control section 53 sets the determination result in step SA5 to "Yes". In step SA9, the sender-related control section 54 executes gift ordering. That is, in step SB1 shown in Fig. 5, the sender-related control section 54 determines whether a gift receiver is designated by the sender. When the determination result is "No", the sender-related control section 54 repeats the above determination.

In this case, when a receiver is designated by the sender, the sender-related control section 54 sets the determination result in step SB1 to "Yes". To designate a receiver, a method is used which designates a receiver out of a list of receivers displayed on the Web site 60. In step SB2, the sender-related control section 54 retrieves the member ID of a receiver out of the member control database 100.

In step SB3, the sender-related control section 54

determines whether the opening flag (best-gift opening flag or worst-gift opening flag) of the receiver concerned (member) in the member control database 100 indicates "Yes". When the determination result is "No", the sender-related control section 54 executes the processing in step SB5. However, when the determination result in step SB3 is "Yes", the sender-related control section 54 retrieves a receiver ID out of the gift-change control database 130 (refer to Fig. 3A) instep SB4.

In step SB5, the sender-related control section 54 displays the selection screen 220 shown in Fig. 13 on the output section 18 of the sender-side client 101. A general-gift-list-consulting button 221 and a best/worst-gift-list-consulting button 222 are displayed on the selection screen 220. Instep SB6, the sender-related control section 54 determines whether the general-gift-list-consulting button 221 is pressed. When the determination result is "Yes", the sender-related control section 54 executes the processing in step SB11.

However, when the determination result in step SB6 is "No", the sender-related control section 54 determines in step SB7 whether the best/worst-gift-list-consulting button 222 is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the sender-related control section 54 executes the determination in step SB6. In this case, when the

best/worst-gift-list-consulting button 222 is pressed, the sender-related control section 54 sets the determination result in step SB7 to "Yes".

In step SB8, the sender-related control section 54 displays the best/worst-gift-list screen 230 shown in Fig. 14 on the output section 181 of the sender-side client 101. The best-gift information 231 and worst-gift information 232 about the above-described best gift and worst gift for a receiver (Taro Akasaka in the case of Fig. 14) are displayed on the best/worst-gift-list screen 230.

These best-gift information 231 and worst-gift information 232 are generated in accordance with the gift-change control information about the receiver concerned in the gift-change control database 130 shown in Fig. 3A. That is, because it is possible to regard a gift corresponding to "original commodity ID" as a gift not suitable for the taste of a receiver, the gift is regarded as the worst gift. However, because it is possible to regard a gift corresponding to "new commodity ID" as a gift suitable for the taste of a receiver, the gift is regarded as the best gift. The order of the worst gift and best gift is decided in accordance with higher appearance frequency of "original commodity ID" and higher appearance frequency of "new commodity ID".

A sender can confirm a gift suitable or not suitable

for a receiver in accordance with the best/worst-gift-list screen 230. In step SB9, the sender-related control section 54 determines whether a best-gift selection button 233 is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the sender-related control section 54 executes the determination in step SB10. In step SB10, the sender-related control section 54 determines whether a general-gift selection button 234 is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the sender-related control section 54 executes the determination in step SB9.

In this case, when the general-gift selection button 234 is pressed, the sender-related control section 54 sets the determination result in step SB10 to "Yes" and executes the processing in step SB11. When the general-gift-list-consulting button 221 (refer to Fig. 13) is pressed, the sender-related control section 54 sets the determination result in step SB6 to "Yes" and executes the processing in step SB11.

In step SB11, the sender-related control section 54 executes the general-gift retrieval of extracting optional information from the gift commodity database 110. In this case, a general gift denotes a gift independent of the relation with the taste of a receiver. In step SB12, the sender-related control section 54 displays the general-gift-list screen 240 shown in Fig. 15 on the output

section 181 of the sender-side client 101 in accordance with the retrieved general-gift information.

A selection check box, commodity ID, price, and detail buttons 2411 and 2412 are displayed on the general-gift-list
5 screen 240. In step SB13, the sender-related control section 54 determines whether a detail button is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the sender-related control section 54 executes the determination in step SB15. In this case, when the detail button 2411 for displaying
10 the detail information about A-store drink assortment is pressed, the sender-related control section 54 sets the determination result in step SB13 to "Yes".

In step SB14, the sender-related control section 54 displays the detail information screen 243 shown in Fig.
15 15 on the output section 181 of the sender-side client 101 based on "specification", "thumbnail file", and "price" of the gift commodity database 110 (refer to fig 2B).

A thumbnail image 244 about A-store drink assortment, price, and specification 245 are displayed on the detail
20 information screen 243. In step SB15, the sender-related control section 54 determines whether a gift selection buttons (246 or 242) is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the sender-related control section 54 executes the determination in step SB13.

25 However, when the best-gift selection button 233 shown

in Fig. 14 is pressed, the sender-related control section 54 sets the determination result in step SB9 to "Yes". In step SB17, the sender-related control section 54 retrieves the gift commodity database 110 (refer to fig 2B) by using
5 the best gift information 231 as a key to extract best-gift information.

In step SB18, the sender-related control section 54 displays the best-gift-list screen 250 shown in Fig. 16 on the output section 181 of the sender-side client 101 in
10 accordance with the best gift information. A selection check box, commodity ID, price, and detail buttons 2511 and 2512 are displayed on the best-gift-list screen 250 similarly to the case of the general-gift-list screen 240 (refer to Fig. 15). However, because the commodity ID displayed on
15 the best-gift-list screen 250 relates to a gift liked by a receiver, the receiver may be pleased at the gift almost without fail.

In step SB13, the sender-related control section 54 determines whether a detail button is pressed. When the
20 determination result is "No", the sender-related control section 54 executes the determination in step SB15. In this case, when the detail button 2511 for displaying the detail information about A-store wine set is pressed, the sender-related control section 54 sets the determination
25 result in step SB13 to "Yes".

In step SB14, the sender-related control section 54 displays the detail information screen 253 shown in Fig. 16 on the output section 181 of the sender-side client 101. A thumbnail image 254 about A-store wine set, price, and specification 255 are displayed on the detail information screen 253.

In step SB15, the sender-related control section 54 determines whether a gift selection button (in this case, a gift selection button 252 or 256) is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the sender-related control section 54 executes the determination in step SB13. In this case, when the gift selection button 256 is pressed, the sender-related control section 54 sets the determination result in step SB15 to "Yes".

In step SB16, the sender-related control section 54 displays a gift-order-information input screen (not illustrated) about gift order information on the output section 181 of the sender-side client 101. The gift order information includes the information about the selected gifts shown in Fig. 2C (in this case, best gifts), the information about a receiver, kind of gift, number of gifts, and scheduled delivery date.

Then, when an order button (not illustrated) on the gift-order-information input screen is pressed, the sender-related control section 54 stores gift order

information in the gift control database 120 shown in Fig. 2C. Moreover, the sender-related control section 54 accepts the order of the gift concerned. Thereby, the mail-transceiving control section 57 transmits order
5 information to the seller-side client 401 through an electronic mail. The seller side executes a series of processings such as securing, delivery arrangement, and settlement of accounts of an ordered gift.

Moreover, the mail-transceiving control section 57
10 communicates that a gift is ordered by a sender to the mail address of a receiver through an electronic mail. However, when the receiver is not provided with a mail address, it is communicated to the receiver that a gift is ordered through means such a post card.

15 Then, the receiver receiving the above notification accesses the server 50 by operating the receiver-side client 301. Thereby, the top screen 200 shown in Fig. 11 is displayed on the output section (not illustrated) of the receiver-side client 301. Thereafter, the receiver
20 undergoes the certification of the member ID and password similarly to the case of the above sender and then, presses the receiver-dedicated-screen button 206. In the case of an embodiment, it is not always necessary to notify a receiver that a gift is ordered by a sender and it is also allowed
25 for the receiver to properly confirm whether there is a gift

addressed to the receiver.

Thereby, the main control section 53 sets the determination result in step SA6 shown in Fig. 4 to "Yes". In step SA10, the receiver-related control section 55 executes the gift confirmation for a receiver to confirm the information about the gift concerned. That is, in step SC1 shown in Fig. 6, the receiver-related control section 55 retrieves the gift control database 120 by using the receiver ID of the receiver concerned as a key and obtains the gift control information corresponding to the receiver. Moreover, in the case of an embodiment, it is not always necessary to notify a receiver that a gift is ordered by a sender. It is also allowed for the receiver to properly confirm whether there is a gift addressed to the receiver.

In step SC2, the receiver-related control section 55 displays the gift list screen 260 shown in Fig. 17 on the output section of the receiver-side client 301 in accordance with the gift control information corresponding to the receiver concerned. A list of gifts presented to the receiver concerned (in this case, Taro Akasaka) is displayed on the gift list screen 260. In the case of the example shown in Fig. 17, it is found that three senders (Hanako Osaka, Kazuo Matsumoto, and Jiro Hakata) respectively send a gift to the receiver (Taro Akasaka).

Gift information 2611 comprises pieces of information

about kinds of gifts: summer gift, commodity ID: A-store
 drink assortment, and scheduled delivery date corresponding
 to a sender (Hanako Osaka). A letter-of-appreciation
 acceptance button 2621 is a button for accepting a letter
 5 of appreciation sent from a receiver (Taro Akasaka) to a
 sender (Hanako Osaka).

A gift change button 2631 is a button for changing
 a gift (A-store drink assortment) sent from the sender
 (Hanako Osaka) to other gift. A scheduled-delivery-date
 10 change button 2641 is a button for changing the scheduled
 delivery date of the gift concerned to other date in
 accordance with circumstances of the receiver (Taro Akasaka).
 A rejection button 2651 is a button for rejecting a gift
 sent from the sender (Hanako Osaka) in accordance with
 15 circumstances of the receiver (Taro Akasaka).

Moreover, gift information 2612 comprises the
 information about kind of commodity: present, commodity ID:
 A-store best laver, and scheduled delivery date,
 corresponding to the sender (Kazuo Matsumoto). A
 20 letter-of-appreciation acceptance button 2622 is a button
 for accepting a letter of appreciation to be sent from the
 receiver (Taro Akasaka) to the sender (Kazuo Matsumoto).

A gift change button 2632 is a button for changing
 a gift (A-store best laver) sent from the sender (Kazuo
 25 Matsumoto) to other gift. A scheduled-delivery-date change

button 2642 is a button for changing the scheduled delivery date of the gift concerned to other date in accordance with circumstances of the receiver (Kazuo Matsumoto). A rejection button 2652 is a button for rejecting a gift sent from the sender (Kazuo Matsumoto) in accordance with circumstances of the receiver (Taro Akasaka).

Moreover, gift information 2613 comprises the information about kind of gift: summer gift, commodity ID: C-store fine-noodle-bundle set, and scheduled delivery date, corresponding to the sender (Jiro Hakata). A letter-of-appreciation acceptance button 2623 is a button for accepting a letter of appreciation to be sent from the receiver (Taro Akasaka) to the sender (Jiro Hakata).

A gift change button 2633 is a button for changing a gift (C-store fine-noodle-bundle set sent from the sender (Jiro Hakata) to other gift. A scheduled-delivery-date change button 2643 is a button for changing the scheduled delivery date of the gift concerned to other date in accordance with circumstances of the receiver (Taro Akasaka). A rejection button 2653 is a button for rejecting a gift sent from the sender (Jiro Hakata) in accordance with circumstances of the receiver (Taro Akasaka). An end button 266 is a button for ending the gift confirmation. A detail-screen button 267 is a button for displaying a detail screen of the detail information about a gift.

Hereafter, the receiver-related control section 55 executes determinations in steps SC3 to SC8 shown in Fig. 6. That is, in step SC3, it is determined whether the letter-of-appreciation acceptance buttons (letter-of-appreciation acceptance button 2621 to 2623 shown in Fig. 17) are pressed. When the determination result is "No", the determination in step SC4 is performed. In step SC4, it is determined whether the gift change buttons (gift change button 2631 to 2633) are pressed. When the determination result is "No", the determination in step SC5 is performed.

In step SC5, it is determined whether the scheduled-delivery-date change buttons (scheduled-delivery-date change button 2641 to 2643) are pressed. When the determination result is "No", the determination in step SC6 is performed. In step SC6, it is determined whether the rejection buttons (rejection button 2651 to 2653) are pressed. When the determination result is "No", the determination in step SC7 is performed. In step SC7, it is determined whether the detail-screen button 267 is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the determination in step SC8 is performed. In step SC8, it is determined whether the end button 266 is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the determination in step SC3 is performed.

In this case, when the letter-of-appreciation button 2621 shown in Fig. 17 is pressed by the receiver (Taro Akasaka), the receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SC3 to "Yes". In step SC9, 5 the receiver-related control section 55 executes the letter-of-appreciation acceptance.

That is, in step SD1 shown in Fig. 7, the receiver-related control section 55 extracts the standardized-sentence data corresponding to a letter of 10 appreciation from the letter of appreciation/rejection standardized-sentence database 140 shown in Fig. 3B and then, displays the letter-of-appreciation edition screen 270 shown in Fig. 18 on the output section of the receiver-side client 301 in accordance with the standardized-sentence data. 15 The letter-of-appreciation edition screen 270 is a screen for selecting a standardized sentence to be entered in a letter of appreciation (summer gift) addressed to the sender (Hanako Osaka) out of a plurality of standardized sentences 271. The standardized sentences 271 correspond to 20 "standardized-sentence data" of the letter-of-appreciation/rejection standardized-sentence database 140 shown in Fig. 3B.

In step SD2, the receiver-related control section 55 determines whether a standardized-sentence selection 25 button 272 is pressed after the standardized-sentence check

box is checked. When the determination result is "No", the receiver-related control section 55 repeats the above determination. Then, when the check box of a standardized sentence "type 1: Thank your very much for your excellent gift..." shown in Fig. 3B is checked by the receiver (Taro Akasaka) and thereafter the standardized-sentence selection button 272 is pressed, the receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SD2 to "Yes".

10 In step SD3, the receiver-related control section 55 displays the confirmation screen 280 shown in Fig. 19 on the output section of the receiver-side client 301. The confirmation screen 280 is a screen for confirming the contents of a letter of appreciation generated in accordance
15 with the standardized sentence selected in step SD2. In this case, it is also possible to edit the displayed standardized sentence by the italic words shown in Fig. 19. In step SD4, the receiver-related control section 55 determines whether a decision button 281 is pressed by the
20 receiver (Taro Akasaka). When the determination result is "No", the receiver-related control section 55 repeats the above determination.

In this case, when the decision button 281 is pressed, the receiver-related control section 55 sets the
25 determination result in step SD4 to "Yes". In step SD5,

the receiver-related control section 55 retrieves the member control database 100 to determine whether there is the mail address of the sender (Hanako Osaka).

In this case, when it is assumed that there is the
 5 mail address, the receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SD5 to "Yes". In step SD6, the mail-transceiving control section 57 sends the letter of appreciation confirmed through the confirmation screen 280 to the sender-side client (Hanako Osaka) through an
 10 electronic mail. However, when the determination result in step SD5 is "No", the letter of appreciation is sent through a mail in step SD8.

In step SD7, the receiver-related control section 55 stores information in "letter of appreciation/rejection ID"
 15 of the gift control database 120 shown in Fig. 2C and updates the gift control database 120.

Then, when the scheduled-delivery-date change button 2641 shown in Fig. 17 is pressed by the receiver (Taro Akasaka), the receiver-related control section 55 sets the
 20 determination result in step SC5 shown in Fig. 6 to "Yes". In step SC11, the receiver-related control section 55 executes the scheduled delivery data change. That is, in step SF1 shown in Fig. 9, the receiver-related control section 55 displays the scheduled-delivery-date change
 25 screen 290 shown in Fig. 20 on the output section of the

receiver-side client 301.

The scheduled-delivery-date change screen 290 is a screen for changing the scheduled delivery data of the gift (A-store drink assortment) sent from the sender (Hanako Osaka) in accordance with circumstances of the receiver (Taro Akasaka). In step SF2, the receiver-related control section 55 determines whether the decision button 292 is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the receiver-related control section 55 repeats the above determination.

In this case, when the check box showing "scheduled delivery date is changed to the following date" is checked by the receiver (Taro Akasaka) and "2000/09/30" is input to a changed-scheduled-delivery-date input space 291 and thereafter the decision button 292 is pressed, the receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SF2 to "Yes". That is, the receiver (Taro Akasaka) changed the scheduled delivery date of the gift concerned from "2000/07/15" to "2000/09/30".

In step SF3, the receiver-related control section 55 stores the information about the changed scheduled delivery date in "scheduled delivery date" of the gift control database 120 (refer to Fig. 2C). In step SF4, the receiver-related control section 55 updates the gift list screen 260 shown in Fig. 17 and displays the gift list screen

260A shown in Fig. 21 on the output section of the receive-side client 301. In the gift list screen 260A, "scheduled delivery date" (netting portion in Fig. 2C) of gift information 261A1 is updated.

5 Moreover, to indefinitely postpone a scheduled delivery date, the receiver (Taro Akasaka) checks the check box of "scheduled delivery data is not designated" shown in Fig. 20 and then presses the decision button 292. In this case, the gift concerned is reserved as data until a
10 scheduled delivery date is designated again. Moreover, a mark "-" denoting indefinite postponement of a scheduled delivery date is stored in "scheduled delivery date" of the gift control database 120 shown in Fig. 2C.

 Then, the receiver (Taro Akasaka) presses the gift
15 change button 2632 shown in Fig. 21 in order to change the gift (commodity ID: A-store best laver) sent from the sender (Kazuo Matsumoto) shown in Fig. 21 to other gift. Thereby, the receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SC4 shown in Fig. 6 to "Yes".
20 In step SC10, the receiver-related control section 55 executes the gift change.

 That is, in step SE1 shown in Fig. 8, the receiver-related control section 55 retrieves a changeable commodity (gift) out of the gift commodity database 110 by
25 using the price of the gift concerned as a key. The

changeable commodity is a commodity kept in the same price range as the gift concerned. In step SE2, the receiver-related control section 55 displays the gift change screen 300 shown in Fig. 22 on the output section of the receiver-side client 301.

Selection check boxes, commodity IDs about changeable commodities, prices, and detail buttons 3011 and 3012 are displayed on the gift change screen 300. When the detail button 3011 is pressed, the receiver-related control section 55 displays a detail information screen 303 about changeable commodities on the output section of the receiver-side client 301 in accordance with "specification", "thumbnail file", and "price" of the gift commodity database 110 (refer to Fig. 2B).

A thumbnail image 304, price, and specification 305 about A-store wine set are displayed on the detail information screen 303. In step SE3, the receiver-related control section 55 determines whether a selection button (the selection button 302 or 306) is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the receiver-related control section 55 repeats the above determination. In this case, when the selection button 306 is pressed, the receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SE3 to "Yes".

In step SE4, the receiver-related control section 55

displays a gift change confirmation screen (not illustrated) on the output section of the receiver-side client 301. The information about changed gifts and a registration button are displayed on the gift change confirmation screen. In
5 step SE5, the receiver-related control section 55 determines whether the above registration button is pressed. When the determination result is "No", the receiver-related control section 55 repeats the above determination. In this case, when the registration button is pressed by the receiver (Taro
10 Akasaka), the receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SE5 to "Yes".

In step SE6, the receiver-related control section 55 registers the information due to the above change in the gift change control database 130 shown in Fig. 3A. Moreover,
15 the receiver-related control section 55 updates the gift control database 120 shown in Fig. 2C. In step SE7, the receiver-related control section 55 updates the gift list screen 260A shown in Fig. 21 and displays the gift list screen 260B shown in Fig. 23 on the output section of the
20 receiver-side client 301. In the gift list screen 260B, "commodity ID" (netting portion in Fig. 23) of gift information 261B2 is updated to "A-store wine set".

Then, the receiver (Taro Akasaka) presses the rejection button 2653 in order to reject a gift sent from
25 the sender (Jiro Hakata) shown in Fig. 23. Thereby, the

receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SC6 shown in Fig. 6 to "Yes". In step SC12, the receiver-related control section 55 executes the rejection.

5 That is, in step SG1 shown in Fig. 10, the receiver-related control section 55 extracts standardized-sentence data corresponding to a letter of rejection from the letter of appreciation/rejection standardized-sentence database 140 shown in Fig. 3B and then,
10 displays the letter-of-rejection edition screen 310 shown in Fig. 24 on the output section of the receiver-side client 301 in accordance with standardized-sentence data. The letter-of-rejection edition screen 310 is a screen for selecting a standardized sentence to be entered in a letter
15 of rejection (return) addressed to the sender (Jiro Hakata) out of a plurality of standardized sentences 311. The standardized sentences 311 correspond to "standardized-sentence data" of the letter of appreciation/rejection standardized-sentence database 140
20 shown in Fig. 3B.

 In step SG2, the receiver-related control section 55 determines whether a standardized-sentence selection button 312 is pressed after a standardized-sentence check box is checked. When the determination result is "No", the
25 receiver-related control section 55 repeats the above

determination. Then, when the check box of the standardized sentence "type 2: because this commodity cannot be accepted,..." is checked by the receiver (Taro Akasaka) and then, the standardized-sentence selection button 312 is pressed, the receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SG2 to "Yes".

In step SG3, the receiver-related control section 55 displays the confirmation screen 320 shown in Fig. 25 on the output section of the receiver-side client 301. The confirmation screen 320 is a screen for confirming the contents of a letter of rejection generated in accordance with the standardized sentence selected in step SG2. In this case, it is also possible to edit a displayed standardized sentence. In step SG4, the receiver-related control section 55 determines whether the decision button 321 is pressed by the receiver (Taro Akasaka). When the determination result is "No", the receiver-related control section 55 repeats the above determination.

In this case, when the decision button 321 is pressed, the receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SG4 to "Yes". In step SG5, the receiver-related control section 55 retrieves the member control database 100 to determine whether there is the mail address of the sender (Jiro Hakata).

In this case, when it is assumed that there is the

mail address, the receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SG5 to "Yes". In step SG6, the mail-transceiving control section 57 sends the letter of rejection confirmed on the confirmation screen 320 to the sender-side client (Jiro Hakata). However, when the
5 the determination result in step SG5 is "No", the letter of rejection concerned is sent through a mail in step SG8.

In step SG7, the receiver-related control section 55 stores information in "letter of appreciation/rejection ID" of the gift control database 120 shown in Fig. 2C, stores
10 a mark "O" in "rejection flag", and updates the gift control database 120. Moreover, the receiver-related control section 55 updates the gift list screen 260B shown in Fig. 23 and displays the gift list screen 260C shown in Fig. 26
15 on the output section of the receiver-side client 301. In the gift list screen 260C, gift information 2613 (refer to Fig. 23) is deleted.

Finally, when the detail screen button 267 shown in Fig. 26 is pressed by the receiver (Taro Akasaka), the
20 receiver-related control section 55 sets the determination result in step SC7 shown in Fig. 6 to "Yes". In step SC13, the receiver-related control section 55 displays the detail screen 330 shown in Fig. 27 on the output section of the receiver-side client 301. Gift information and the history
25 information about the above-described

letter-of-appreciation acceptance, gift change, scheduled-delivery-date change, and rejection are displayed on the detail screen 330.

As described above, according to this embodiment, the
5 gift-change-history information about a receiver is stored
in the gift change control database 130 (refer to Fig. 3A)
and the gift change history information is provided to a
sender-side client when a gift is ordered. Therefore, it
is possible to confirm the trend of the taste of the receiver
10 in accordance with the gift change history information and
thereby, avoid the waste of presenting an unnecessary gift
and improve the convenience and profitability of a sender,
receiver, and seller of a gift.

Moreover, the information about a best gift suitable
15 for at least the receiver concerned is provided to a
sender-side client when a gift is order in accordance with
gift change history information. Therefore, it is possible
to confirm a gift liked by a receiver and thereby, avoid
the waste of presenting an unnecessary gift and improve the
20 convenience and profitability of a sender, receiver, and
seller of a gift.

Furthermore, the information about a worst gift not
suitable for at least the receiver concerned is provided
to a sender-side client when a gift is ordered in accordance
25 with gift change history information. Therefore, it is

possible to confirm a gift not liked by a receiver and thereby, avoid the waste of presenting an unnecessary gift and improve the convenience and profitability of a sender, receiver, and seller of a gift.

5 Furthermore, because a letter of appreciation to be sent from a receiver to a sender is accepted and the letter of appreciation is sent to a sender-side client (sender) through an electronic mail or a mail, it is possible to improve the convenience of the receiver.

10 Furthermore, because a letter of rejection for rejecting a gift sent from a sender is accepted and the letter of rejection is sent to a sender-side client (sender) through an electronic mail or a mail, it is possible to electronically record and control that a receiver does not securely receive
15 the gift and reduce the mental burden of the receiver due to rejection of the gift and avoid wasteful delivery of the gift.

 A preferred embodiment of the present invention is described above in detail by referring to the accompanying
20 drawings. However, a specific configuration is not restricted to the embodiment. Design modifications are included in the present invention as long as the modifications are not deviated from the gist of the present invention. For example, in the case of the above embodiment,
25 it is also allowed to record a gift mediating program for

realizing the function of the server 50 in the computer-readable recording medium 500 shown in Fig. 28 and realize the function of the server 50 by making the computer 400 shown in Fig. 28 read the gift mediating program recorded in the recording medium 500 and executing the program.

The computer 400 shown in Fig. 28 is constituted of a CPU (Central Processing Unit) 401 for executing the gift mediating program, input units 402 such as a keyboard and a mouse, a ROM (Read Only Memory) 403 for storing various data values, a RAM 404 for storing operation parameters, a reader 405 for reading the gift mediating program from the recording medium 500, output units 406 such as a display and a printer, and a bus BU for connecting various sections of a system.

The CPU 401 realizes the function of the above server 50 by reading a gift mediating program recorded in the recording medium 500 via the reader 405 and then executing the program. The recording medium 500 includes not only portable recording media such as an optical disk, floppy disk, and hard disk but also a transmission medium for temporarily storing data such as a network.

As described above, according to one aspect of this invention, because the gift change information about a receiver is stored and provided for a sender-side client when a gift is ordered, it is possible to confirm the trend

of the taste of a receiver in accordance with the gift change information. Therefore, advantages are obtained that it is possible to avoid the waste of presenting an unnecessary gift and improve the convenience and profitability of a sender, receiver, and seller of a gift.

According to another aspect of this invention, because the best gift information suitable for at least the receiver concerned is provided to a sender-side client when a gift is ordered in accordance with gift change information, it is possible to confirm a gift liked by the receiver. Therefore, advantages are obtained that it is possible to avoid the waste of presenting an unnecessary gift and improve the convenience and profitability of a sender, receiver, and seller of a gift.

According to still another aspect of this invention, because the worst-gift information not suitable for at least the receiver concerned is provided to a sender-side client when a gift is ordered in accordance with gift change information, it is possible to confirm a gift not liked by the receiver. Therefore, advantages are obtained that it is possible to avoid the waste of presenting an unnecessary gift and improve the convenience and profitability of a sender, receiver, and seller of a gift.

According to still another aspect of this invention, because a letter of appreciation sent from a receiver to

a sender is accepted and sent to a sender-side client in the form of at least electronic data. Therefore, an advantage is obtained that it is possible to improve the convenience of a receiver.

5 According to still another aspect of this invention, a letter of rejection for rejecting a gift sent from a sender is accepted and sent to a sender-side client in the form of at least electronic data. Therefore, advantages are obtained that it is possible to electronically record and
10 control that a receiver did not receive the gift concerned, reduce the mental burden of the receiver due to rejection of the gift, and avoid unnecessary delivery of the gift.

 According to still another aspect of this invention, because the information about a gift suitable for the
15 receiver concerned is received out of gift change information, it is possible to confirm a gift liked by a receiver. Therefore, advantages are obtained that it is possible to avoid the waste of presenting an unnecessary gift and improve the convenience and profitability of a sender, receiver,
20 and seller of a gift.

 According to still another aspect of this invention, because the information of a gift not suitable for the receiver concerned is received out of gift change information, it is possible to confirm a gift not liked by a receiver.
25 Therefore, advantages are obtained that it is possible to

avoid the waste of presenting an unnecessary gift and improve the convenience and profitability of a sender, receiver, and seller of a gift.

According to still another aspect of this invention,
5 designation information showing that a letter of appreciation is sent from a receiver to a sender is transmitted. Therefore, an advantage is obtained that it is possible to improve the convenience of a receiver about sending of a letter of appreciation.

10 According to still another aspect of this invention, designation information showing that a gift sent from a sender is rejected is transmitted. Therefore, advantages are obtained that it is possible to reduce the mental burden of a receiver due to rejection of a gift and avoid unnecessary
15 delivery.

Although the invention has been described with respect to a specific embodiment for a complete and clear disclosure, the appended claims are not to be thus limited but are to be construed as embodying all modifications and alternative
20 constructions that may occur to one skilled in the art which fairly fall within the basic teaching herein set forth.